



The International Fancy Guppy Association



Dedicated to Promoting The Fancy Guppy Hobby

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Building A Room In A Small Area

By Ed Richmond

Living in a condo I had to find a way to fit the fifty fish tanks that I planned on into a small 11x9 foot room. The first step was to install two double 40 watt fluorescent lights from the ceiling. This would give me more than enough light for this size room.

I have had my share of building fish rooms during the last 25 years and I decided that I no longer wanted to use wood racks. The solution came to me when I went to the Home Supply Center and found steel shelving. This was the heavy duty type capable of holding 1,500 lbs per shelf. These come in two sizes, 36 and 48 inches wide, 18 inches deep and 72 inches high and come with a hardboard shelf which helps to keep the rack rigid. I decided I only wanted to use three shelves and not the five that it was capable of. I also cut them down to 60 inches which would keep the top tanks at eye level. Along the eleven foot wall I was able to fit two 36 inch racks and one 48 inch rack. You only need a hammer to assemble, as it is inter locking and goes up in minutes.

When it came to the air supply I decided I wanted something small and quiet and found the answer in "THE PUMP" model 20 manufactured by Hagen. Although slightly expensive, it is totally silent and practically maintenance free and puts out more than enough air for the fifty tanks and three brine shrimp hatches. The pump was hooked up to 1/2 inch PVC pipe which loops around the racks and holes were drilled for the brass valves.

In the room I am fortunate in having an individually controlled radiator which provides both heat and air conditioning. This is real convenient on those humid 90 degree days. I also supplement the heat in the winter months with a small space heater. Another advantage to this room is that being on the top floor I am able to allow in a lot of natural sunlight. In the late afternoons, this really shows up the vivid colors of the fish and actually seems to make them more active. I am able to control daylight by using a vertical blind, also opening the window a crack helps to keep down the humidity.

On the wall with the three units, I keep ten 5 gallon and six 2.5 gallon tanks on the top shelf, and ten 10 gallon tanks on each of the other shelves. I keep my breeders generally in trios in the 2.5 gallon tanks and put the females in the 5 gallon tanks to drop their young. I keep the babies there until they are about 6 weeks old.. At this point, I try to cull them down to about 8 males and 4 females per 10 gallon tank.

Because of the lack of space I am rarely able to keep virgin females, therefore, at about 3 1/2 months of age, I will set up my breeding trios with the hit females in 2 1/2 gallon tanks, but will not take any young for 2 months at which time the young will be from the new male 90% of the time. I have experimented with various color crosses and found this method to work provided you use active healthy males.

I change 30% of the water two times a week, siphoning by using a small Flotec pump, which pumps the old water into the bathroom waste pipe. I refill by a hose straight from the tap mixing hot and cold to the correct temperature and have had no problems in using this method in over two years. This works for me as I only have chlorine added to my water supply and 30% of fresh water added is not a problem. I use simple box filters with marbles and floss and change them every two weeks.

One thing I find to be necessary in preventing disease, is to wipe down the inside of the tanks every week to remove any slime buildup. I feel that allowing any slime to build up especially on the bottoms of the tanks will cause tail rot, when the fish lay on it at night.

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Filtration



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